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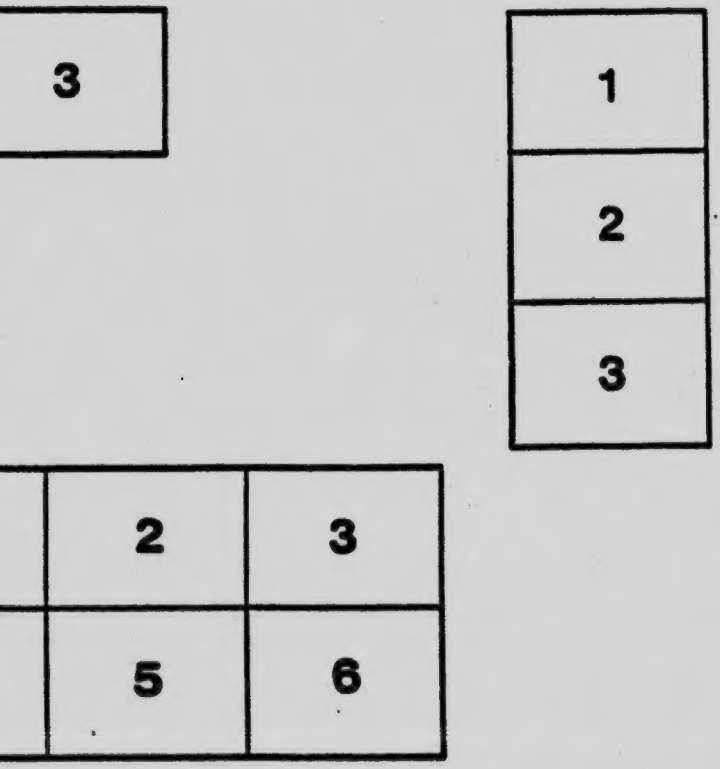

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Church Union.

MONTREAL LAYMEN ORGANIZE TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE.

Constitution Adopted and Officers Elected.

On January 17, 1903, in the Y.M.C.A., Montreal, a number of laymen met and organized for the advancement of church union in Canada.

The following constitution was adopted :—

1. The name of this society [illegible]e "The Church Union Society."

2. The object of this society shall be (a) To collect and disseminate, either by the press or otherwise, all information that will tend to advance the cause of Church Union in Canada. (b) To enlist the sympathies and services of as many people as possible to carry out the above idea.

3. Any member (in good standing) of any evangelical church shall be eligible for membership in this society, provided he believes in church union, and on the payment of an annual fee of fifty cents.

4. The officers of this society shall consist of: President, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, who, with three other members, shall constitute the executive committee.

5. The officers shall be elected annually, by ballot, at the first meeting of the society in each year.

6. The funds of this society shall be used entirely for the cause of Church Union.

7. Five members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the society, and three at any meeting of the executive committee, and all questions shall be decided by a majority vote.

8. Regular meetings shall be held monthly, at a time to be arranged for at the call of the secretary.

9. Special meetings may be held at any time, at the call of the president, or at the request of any three members.

The following officers were elected:—

President—Geo. E. Roberton.
Vice-President—A. R. Grafton.
Secretary—W. G. Hunt, 9 Gladstone Ave., Montreal.
Treasurer—J. N. McKim.

The following with the above-named officers to form the executive:—
L. H. Packard, Jas. Wilson, Chas. Morton.

From minutes of **General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada,** Toronto, June, 1902:

Principal Cavan presented a memorial from the Society of Christian Unity, signed by Dr. Sheraton, Dr. Chown, Dr. Symonds, Dr. Burwash and Mr. Heathcote, as well as by Dr. Caven himself, setting forth the waste of resources of the Christian Churches, by the unnecessary multiplication of agencies in many localities, and drawing the attention of the Assembly to the subject. He concluded by moving the following resolution:—

That the Assembly approve of the aim of the memorial, and express approval of the action of the Home Mission Committee in conferring with any committee of the Church of England, of the Methodist Church or of either of them, as opportunity may offer, regarding the important matter to which the memorial relates.

The motion was seconded and agreed to.

From the minutes of the **General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada,** Winnipeg, Sept., 1902:

"While this Conference declares itself in favor of a measure of organic unity, wide enough to embrace all the evangelical denominations in Canada, and regrets that hitherto all efforts and negotiations have failed to result in the formulation of such a comprehensive scheme, so that at present the outlook for it does not seem practicable; yet, inasmuch as the problem of the unification of several of these denominations appears to present much less serious obstacles, since their relations are already marked by a great degree of spiritual unity, and they have already become closely assimilated in standards and ideals of church life, forms of worship and ecclesiastical polity; and since, further, the present conditions of our country and those in immediate prospect demand the most careful economy of the resources of the leading and aggressive evangelical denominations, both in ministers and money, in order to overtake the religious needs of the people pouring into our new settlements, which economy seems impossible without further organic unity or its equivalent; this General Conference is of the opinion that the time is opportune for a definite, practical movement concentrating attention and aiming at the practical organic unity of these denominations already led by Providence into such close fraternal relations; and whereas a definite proposal has been discussed to some extent in the press and elsewhere, looking to the ultimate organic union of the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist Churches in Canada, this General Conference, in no spirit of exclusiveness towards others not named, declares that it would regard a movement with this object in view with great gratification, believing that the deliberate friendly discussion of the doctrinal, practical, and administrative problems involved, with the purpose of reaching agreement, would not only facilitate the finding and formulation of a basis of union, but would also educate the people interested into a deeper spirit of unity and into that spirit of reasonable mutual concession on which the successful consummation of such movement ultimately so largely depends; and this General Conference would further commend this movement to the prayerful interest and sympathy of the Methodist Church in the devout and earnest hope that, if organic union of the denominations named be achieved, it may be accompanied with great blessings to the church and to the nation at large, and redound to the greater glory of God."

Following are interviews re Church Union published in daily papers:—

Prof. Ross, Presbyterian College, Montreal.—Of course he was in sympathy with the idea of Union. He thought it especially desirable that there should be union between the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. The Methodist had certain excellencies that would be advantageous to the Presbyterians, while the Presbyterians thought they had some things which might be of value to the Methodists.

Rev. Dr. Robt. Campbell, Montreal, Presbyterian.—He would certainly be rejoiced could the prayer of the Lord be realized "That they all may be one." If there was to be union, he certainly thought there should be the inclusion of the Anglicans in the scheme, for he deemed that the Anglican Church represented an aspect of religious life that would be desirable to include. "I would be willing for my part to accept a basis of union which would simply give us the Apostles' Creed."

Prof. Scrimger, Presbyterian College, Montreal.—Said that he was heartily in sympathy with the idea of union as outlined by the resolution of the Methodist Conference. He would be quite willing to subscribe to a basis of union which would leave the doctrinal differences between the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches an open question.

Rev. Dr. Barclay, Montreal, Presbyterian.—It had been talked and written about, but there had been no practical plan evolved for Corporate Union which would be satisfactory to all the parties to it. He heartily recognized the newer and better spirit which existed among the Churches to-day. A spirit which was full of promise for the future.

Rev. Dr. Shaw, Principal of Wesley College. Montreal.—Is such a union practicable? Yes, provided both Churches deal with it in a frank and friendly way. As to creeds there need be no difficulty if we agree to admit to the ministry any candidate subscribing either to Armenian or Calvinistic symbols. As to itinerancy, that can be modified so as to have appointments partially settled and partially itinerant.

Dr. Jackson, Professor, Wesley College, Montreal.—The over-lapping of the different denominations in the sparsely populated portions of our own county, while millions of our fellowmen have never heard the gospel, is a disgrace to the christians of this age, and ought to cease at once. In our colleges too, there is room for consolidation. There is no reason under the sun unless it is denominational suspicion or narrowness why the Theological Colleges in this city should not in many departments have a common professoriate.

Rev. C. E. Manning, Montreal, Methodist.—The time seems ripe for the Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists to consider on what basis they can be organized into one body.

Rev. Hugh Pedley, Montreal, Congregationalist.—Christ said that new [illegible]ne must have new bottles. In the matter of Church Union, the new wine is seeking new bottles. Ministers and Laymen alike are beginning to feel the [illegible] this demand.

[illegible] resbyterian and Methodist Churches could devise a plan of union, it [illegible]er likely that most of the Congregationalists would, of their own [illegible]ter into it most heartily. Such a united Church would doubtless be [illegible] in its basis, and not priestly.

[illegible] J. Fleck, Montreal, Presbyterian.—We feel that in the things that lie deep down out of sight there is already substantial unity. Why should it not also appear on the surface? And what in the meantime hinders? Chiefly forms of government, modes of administering the Sacraments and the mere wrappings and trappings of worship.

Rev. A. J. Mowatt, Montreal, Presbyterian.—As regards Methodists and Congregationalists, every new year seems to be bringing us nearer them and them to us. Let, however, the tide of fuller blessing rise higher and higher and flow in upon us all, and sooner than we know the barriers of sand now keeping us apart will be swept away, and we will find that we are all one in Him who is Lord of all.

Rev. C. A. Sykes, B.D., Montreal, Methodist.—Enlightened public opinion, the great common sense of the people, is behind the movement for union of the Christian churches. To me it is a peculiar pleasure to see the rapproachement of these great bodies, and I think they are meeting well nigh half way.

Rev. Dr. Williams, Montreal, Methodist.—The differences now are chiefly in the modes of church government, and when these are carefully examined, weighed, and measured accurately, it will be found that a large proportion of the differences of government consists in the names given Church Courts and their officials, while the practical workings are substantially the same. Premature Organic Union would be a grievous mistake, but are not those churches even now ripe for a forward step all along the line.

Principal Patrick, Manitoba Presbyterian College, Winnipeg.—As fraternal delegate to Methodist General Conference, "I cannot conscientiously justify our continued separation."

Principal Caven, Knox College, Toronto.—I would to God there were further external union either organic or federal in some form or under some name, some further union that would consolidate our power, unite us against the common enemies of all churches and enable us to prosecute at home and abroad the work that is given us to do.

Presbyterian Witness.—In weak outlying sections of the country, in small towns and villages Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists often appear rivals. It is a great pity and ought not to be. The Methodist form of government is essentially Presbyterian, in preaching the gospel, the ministers of both churches emphasize the same great doctrines of grace. They have to contend against the same enemies and in the sacred conflict they wage they use the same weapons. Let us therefore, as a step in the right direction, aim at federation.

Members and Adherents per Census Report, 1901.		Percentage of Population of Canada.	Membership per Church Records.
Presbyterian....	842,301	15.68 p.c.	219,570
Methodist.....	916,862	17.07 p.c.	291,895
Congregational.	28,283	.53 p.c.	9,000
	1,787,446	33.23 p.c.	520,465 or 9.7 p.c of total population of Canada.

Moneys Raised for all Purposes Exclusive of 20th Century Fund.		Moneys Raised for Missions and Augmentations 1901-2.
Presbyterian.....	$2,364,331 00	$304,414 23
Methodist.....	2,775,823 00	307,220 00
Congregational.....	117,383 00	4,720 92
	$5,257,537 00	$616,355 15

TOTAL DEBTS CARRIED.

Presbyterian.....	$1,549,298
Methodist.....	2,020,229
Congregational.....	192,215
Total.....	$3,761,742

To carry debt at 5 per cent. costs $188,087 per year.

ANNUAL ORDINARY EXPENDITURE OF A FEW DENOMINATIONAL COLLEGES.

	Montreal.	Toronto.	Winnipeg.	Total.
Presbyterian	$15,629 86	$19,391 88	$24,877 55	$59,899 29
Methodist.....	9,117 00	34,682 53	17,097 62	60,897 15
Congregational.....	10,300 95	.....	.....	10,300 95
Total:.....	$35,047 81	$54,074 41	$41,975 17	$131,097 39

STUDENTS ENROLLED 1901-2.

	Montreal.	Toronto.	Winnipeg.	Total.
Presbyterian	52	69	190	311
Methodist	32	316	143	491
Congregational.....	17	—	—	17
Total.....	101	385	333	819

PROFESSORS AND LECTURERS 1901-2.

	Montreal.	Toronto.	Winnipeg.	Total.
Presbyterian.....	9	8	10	27
Methodist.....	4	15	5	24
Congregational.....	4	..	..	4
Total.....	17	23	15	5